

## § 550.35

- (iii) Whistle blower protection;
  - (iv) Confidentiality;
  - (v) Timely resolution;
  - (2) Promptly conduct an inquiry into any allegation of research misconduct;
  - (3) Conduct an investigation if an inquiry determines that the allegation or apparent instance of research misconduct has substance;
  - (4) Provide appropriate separation of responsibilities between those responsible for inquiry and investigation, and those responsible for adjudication;
  - (5) Advise REE Agency of outcome at end of inquiries and investigations into allegations or instances of research misconduct; and
  - (6) Upon request, provide the REE Agency, upon request, hard copy (or website address) of their policies and procedures related to research misconduct.
- (c) Research misconduct or allegations of research misconduct shall be reported to the USDA Research Integrity Officer (RIO) and/or to the USDA, Office of Inspector General (OIG) Hotline.
- (1) The USDA RIO can be reached at: USDA Research Integrity Officer, 214-W Whitten Building, Washington, DC 20250, Telephone: 202-720-5923, Email: [researchintegrity@usda.gov](mailto:researchintegrity@usda.gov).
- (2) The USDA OIG Hotline can be reached on: 1-800-424-9121.

## § 550.35 Rules of the workplace.

Cooperator employees, while engaged in work at the REE Agency's facilities, will abide by the Agency's standard operating procedures regarding the maintenance of laboratory notebooks, dissemination of information, equipment operation standards, hours of work, conduct, and other incidental matters stated in the rules and regulations of the Agency.

### EQUIPMENT/PROPERTY STANDARDS

## § 550.36 Purpose of equipment/property standards.

Sections 550.37 through 550.42 of this part set forth uniform standards governing management and disposition of property furnished by the Federal Government or acquired by the Cooperator with funds provided by the Federal Government. The Cooperator may use

## 7 CFR Ch. V (1-1-16 Edition)

its own property management standards and procedures provided it observes other applicable provisions of this Part.

## § 550.37 Title to equipment.

- (a) As authorized by 7 U.S.C. 3318(d), title to expendable and nonexpendable equipment, supplies, and other tangible personal property purchased with Federal funding in connection with a non assistance cooperative agreement shall vest in the Cooperator from date of acquisition unless otherwise stated in the cooperative agreement.
- (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this rule the REE Agency may, at its discretion, retain title to equipment described in paragraph (a) of this section that is or may be purchased with Federal funds when the REE agency determines that it is in the best interest of the Federal Government.

## § 550.38 Equipment.

- (a) The Cooperator shall not use equipment acquired with Federal funds to provide services to non-Federal outside organizations for a fee that is less than private companies charge for equivalent services, unless specifically authorized by Federal statute, for as long as the Federal Government retains an interest in the equipment.
- (b) The Cooperator shall use the equipment in the project or program for which it was acquired as long as needed, whether or not the project or program continues to be supported by Federal funds and shall not encumber the property without approval of the REE Agency. When no longer needed for the original project or program, the Cooperator shall use the equipment in connection with its other federally-sponsored activities, in the following order of priority:

- (1) Activities sponsored by the REE Agency which funded the original project, then
- (2) Activities sponsored by other Federal awarding agencies.
- (c) During the time that equipment is used on the project or program for which it was acquired, the Cooperator shall make it available for use on other projects or programs if such other use will not interfere with the work on the